



April 15, 2004

Mr. Henry Dean, Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District
3301 Gun Club Road
West Palm Beach, Florida 33416-4680

Dear Mr. Dean,

On behalf of the Southwest Florida Watershed Council, I thank you for accepting the role of lead agency for the State of Florida in the effort to secure the Babcock Ranch lands for the public domain. We appreciate the willingness of the District to undertake this important work, and we stand ready to assist you in any way that we can as a private, not-for-profit entity.

The citizens of Florida are very fortunate that Fred Babcock was such a fine steward of the Ranch that bears his name. Since Mr. Babcock's heirs do not want to retain ownership of the Ranch, its future is uncertain. It has tremendous value in terms of water storage, filtration and supply, wildlife habitat and recreation, and its placement into the public domain would be a lasting tribute to Mr. Babcock and provide a remarkable resource for generations of Floridians.

We look forward to helping with this worthwhile endeavor, and again, we thank you for your leadership!

Sincerely,

Susan Brookman
Chairman

Copies: Mr. Bob Janes, Lee County
Mr. Adam Cummings, Charlotte County
Mr. David Burr, Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
Mr. Wayne Daltry, Lee County

The mission of the Southwest Florida Watershed Council is to protect, conserve, manage and/or restore the land and water resources of the Caloosahatchee and Big Cypress Watersheds. Through increased awareness, participation and cooperation among all stakeholders in consensus building, planning and decision making, we are working to meet the economic, natural and cultural needs for this and succeeding generations.